PALESTINE EXPLORATION QUARTERLY

1954-1957

Embodying the *Quarterly Statement* of the Palestine Exploration Fund and the *Bulletin* of the British School of Archæology in Jerusalem

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

	PAGE
NOTES AND NEWS	1
LAND TENURE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT .. .. By K. H. HENREY	5
THE TOMBS OF SANHEDRIA—II .. .. By JULIUS JOTHAM-ROTHSCHILD	16
BAR KOKHBA AND AKIBA .. .. By S. A. BIRNBAUM	23
REVIEWS AND NOTICES	33

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INDEX 1954–1955

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INDEX 1954-1955

INDEX TO THE NAMES OF AUTHORS AND TITLES OF CONTRIBUTIONS

1954

PAGE

Allegro, J. M.—
A Newly Discovered Fragment of a Commentary on Psalm XXXVII from Qumrân 69

Birnbaum, S. A.—
Bar Kokhba and Akiba 23

Guillaume, A.—
מאד in I Samuel XX, 19 83

Henrey, K. H.—
Land Tenure in the Old Testament 5

Jotham-Rothschild, J.—
The Tombs of Sanhedria—II 16

Kaplan, J.—
Two Chalcolithic Vessels from Palestine 97

Kenyon, K. M.—
Excavations at Jericho, 1954 45

Prausnitz, M. W.—
Abydos and Combed Ware 91

Rowe, Alan—
A Provisional Chronological Table of the Prehistoric and Historic Ages of Palestine 76

Scott, R. B. Y.—
Another Griffin Seal from Samaria 87

Zeuner, F. E.—
The Neolithic Bronze Age Gap on the Tell of Jericho 64

Reviews and Notices:

FitzGerald, G. M.—
Lachish III (Tell ed-Duweir). By Olga Tufnell 107

Hooke, S. H.—
History of the Old Testament. By Dr. Paul Heinisch 33
The Servant of the Lord. By H. H. Rowley 33
The Hand-Produced Book. By David Diringer 34
Everyday Life in Babylon and Assyria. By G. Contenau 106

Thomas, D. Winton—
Babylonian and Assyrian Religion. By S. H. Hooke 36

Wiesenberg, E.—
The Zadokite Documents. I. The Admonition. II. The Laws. By Chaim Rabin 101

Anati, Emmanuel—
Ancient Rock Drawings in the Central Negev 49
Bentwich, Norman—
Sir Ronald Storrs 107
Birnbaum, S. A.—
The Beth Mashku Document 21
Cazelles, Henri—
David's Monarchy and the Gibeonite Claim 165
Driver, G. R.—
Birds in the Old Testament: I. Birds in Law 5
Birds in the Old Testament: II. Birds in Life 129
Hebrew Seals 183
Gray, John—
Royal Substitution in the Ancient Near East 180
Isserlin, B. S. J.—
Ancient Forests in Palestine: Some Archaeological Indications 87
Kenyon, K. M.—
Excavations at Jericho—1955 108
Loewe, Raphael—
The Earliest Biblical Allusion to Coined Money? 141
North, Robert.—
The Damascus of Qumrân Geography 34
Roth, Cecil—
Messianic Symbols in Palestine Archaeology 151
Rowe, Alan—
A Provisional Chronological Table of the Prehistoric and Historic Ages of Palestine—II 176
Yadin, Yigael—
Goliath's Javelin and the מנור אורגים 58
Zeuner, F. E.—
The Goats of Early Jericho 70
Notes on the Bronze Age Tombs of Jericho—I 118
Zori, Nehemia—
A Cylinder-Seal Impression from Mount Gilboa 89

Reviews and Notices:

Diringer, D.—
Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century, B.C. By G. R. Driver 95
Driver, G. R.—
The Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri. By Emil G. Kraeling 91
Hooke, S. H.—
The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament. By J. B. Pritchard 186
Discoveries in the Judaean Desert I: Qumrân Cave I. By D. Barthélemy and J. T. Milik 187
du P. Taylor, J.—
Photography for Archaeologists. By M. B. Cookson 96
Wheeler, M.—
The Lighter Side of Dig Life 184
Wiesenberg, E.—
Klei Haheres Besifrut Hatalmud (Ceramics in Talmudic Literature). By Yehoshua Brand 97

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1954

PAGE

THE TOMBS OF SANHEDRIA—II:—

Fig. 1. Greek and Ancient Hebrew Letters 21
PLATE I. Tomb I .. .. *facing* 16
PLATE II. Tomb III .. .. ,, 16
PLATE III. Tombs X–XIII .. .. ,, 16
PLATE IV.
1. Tomb X .. .. ,, 16
2. Tomb XIII .. .. ,, 16
PLATE V.
1. Winepress .. .. ,, 16
2. Water-trough .. .. ,, 16

A BAR-KOKHBA LETTER:—

PLATE VI. Facsimile of Letter .. .. ,, 32

EXCAVATIONS AT JERICHO, 1954:—

Fig. 1. Plan of Tell 46
Fig. 2. Section of East End of Trench I, with Schematic Section of Whole Trench to Indicate Position 50
PLATE VII. General View of Trench I, Looking West Towards the Mount of Temptation .. .. *facing* 50
PLATE VIII.
1. Neolithic Skeleton .. .. ,, 50
2. Neolithic Skeleton with Second Skull beside it .. .. .. ,, 50
PLATE IX.
1. Collection of Limbs .. .. ,, 50
2. Neolithic Skeleton with Skull removed .. .. ,, 50
PLATE X. Large Neolithic Building, possibly Temple, from East .. .. ,, 50
PLATE XI.
1. Large Neolithic Building, possibly Temple, from West .. .. ,, 50
2. Central Basin in large Neolithic Building .. .. ,, 50
PLATE XII. Neolithic Town Wall, with Earlier One Beneath it .. .. ,, 50
PLATE XIII.
1. Building of Intermediate Early Bronze-Middle Bronze Period .. ,, 50
2. Foundation Cist with Infant Bones, beneath E.B.–M.B. Building .. ,, 50
PLATE XIV. Stone Revetment at Foot of Latest Middle Bronze Age Defences .. .. ,, 50
PLATE XV.
1. Middle Bronze Age Houses and Street in Site H .. .. .. ,, 50
2. Late Bronze Age Floor in Site H .. .. ,, 50
PLATE XVI.
1. Oven and Juglet on Late Bronze Age Floor .. .. *facing* 50
2. Miniature Neolithic Mother Goddess Figurine .. .. .. ,, 50
3. Miniature Wooden Juglet from Middle Bronze Age Tomb .. .. ,, 50
PLATE XVII.
1. Burial of Middle Bronze Age Warrior .. .. ,, 50
2. Bronze Belt, Axe-Head and Dagger from Warrior Burial .. .. ,, 50
3. Bronze Belt *in situ* .. .. ,, 50
4. Beaker in Form of Ram's Head from Warrior Burial 51

PAGE

EXCAVATIONS AT JERICHO, 1954, *contd.*—

Fig. 3. Diagrammatic Section Through Tell to illustrate the Accumulation of the Different Periods 52
Fig. 4. Section of Central Portion of Trench I 57
Fig. 5. Section of West End of Trench I 59

A NEWLY DISCOVERED FRAGMENT OF A COMMENTARY ON PSALM XXXVII FROM QUMRAN:—

PLATE XVIII .. .. *facing* 74

ANOTHER GRIFFIN SEAL FROM SAMARIA:—

FIG. 6. 87

ABYDOS AND COMBED WARE:—

Fig. 7. Simple Combing 91
Fig. 8. Pattern Combing 92
Figs. 9–12. Wheel Combing (Band Combing) 93
Fig. 13. Pattern Combed Jar from Ras Shamra 95
PLATE XIX. Pattern Combed Storage Jar .. .. *facing* 96
PLATE XX. Megiddo Stages .. .. „ 97

TWO CHALCOLITHIC VESSELS FROM PALESTINE:—

PLATE XXI. The Churn .. .. „ 98

1955

THE BETH MASHKU DOCUMENT:—

PLATE I. The Beth Mashku Document .. .. *facing* 21

THE DAMASCUS OF QUMRAN GEOGRAPHY:—

Fig. 1. Map. The Zadokite " Land of Damascus " 35

ANCIENT ROCK DRAWINGS IN THE CENTRAL NEGEV:—

Fig. 1. Map. Rock Drawings Zone. Drawing by J. Leibovitch .. 49
PLATE II. An engraved rock showing Flint Tools as found *in situ* ..
PLATE III. A Group of Horned Animals belonging to Style II overlaid by Stylized Antelopes from the Nabataean Period. *Cf.* with Fig. .. ..
PLATE IV. Hunting scene belonging to Style III .. ..
PLATE V.
1. A Photograph of the scene shown on Pl. IV. .. .. ..
2. A Modern Bedouin Petrograph .. ..
PLATE VI.
1. Rock-engravings belong to Style IV, accompanied by a double inscription (Thamudic and Nabataean), and overlaid by drawings belonging to Style VI, and by several modern Wussum (Style VII) .. ..
2. A Nabataean inscription accompanying an antelope belonging to Style IV (the antelope is cut in the upper left of the photograph) .. .. *between* 56–57
Figs. 2 to 11. 50–56

PAGE

GOLIATH'S JAVELIN AND THE מנור ארגים

Figs. 1–15. For description see p. 69. 60–68

THE GOATS OF EARLY JERICHO:—

PLATE VII.

Figs. 1–5b 77

PLATE VIII.

Figs. 6–23 79

PLATE IX.

Figs. 24–37 (for description of figures see pp. 76–86) 82

A CYLINDER-SEAL IMPRESSION FROM MT. GILBOA:—

PLATE X. Cylinder-Seal Impression from Mt. Gilboa .. .. .. *facing* 90

PLATE XI. Pottery from Mt. Gilboa .. .. *facing* 91

EXCAVATIONS AT JERICHO—1955:—

PLATE XII. Air View of Tell, March 1954 (*By courtesy of the Arab Legion Air Force*) 112

PLATE XIII.

1. Neolithic Stone Tower from S. On Left, Earlier Neolithic Town Wall .. .. ,, 112
2. Neolithic Stone Tower from N. .. .. ,, 112

PLATE XIV.

1. Remains of Neolithic Wall in Site M, possibly continuation of Later Neolithic Town Wall .. .. ,, 112
2. Detail of Large Orthostat in Neolithic Wall in Site M .. .. ,, 112

PLATE XV.

1. Square E.I. Neolithic House, with Courtyard in fore-ground .. ,, 112
2. Square E.II. Neolithic Rush Mat .. .. ,, 112

PLATE XVI.

1. Square E.V. Neolithic Rush Mat, with Trace of White Ant .. ,, 112
2. Square E.I. Two superimposed Neolithic Rush Mats .. .. ,, 112

PLATE XVII.

1. Late Chalcolithic Tomb, with Intermediate Early Bronze-Middle Bronze Age Tomb cut into it .. .. ,, 112
2. Detail of Roof of Intermediate Early Bronze-Middle Bronze Age Tomb cut into fill of Late Chalcolithic Tomb.. .. .. ,, 112

PLATE XVIII.

1. Burnt Fallen Timbers in Early Bronze Age Structure, Trench III .. ,, 112
2. Trench II. House of Intermediate Early Bronze-Middle Bronze Period .. .. ,, 112

PLATE XIX.

1. Trench III. Ash Level against Early Bronze Age Town Wall .. ,, 112
2. Trench III. Middle Bronze Age Retaining Wall, Buried beneath Plastered Scarp .. .. ,, 112

PLATE XX.

1. Trench II. Structural Walls in fill beneath Plastered Scarp .. ,, 112
2. Trench III. Small Rooms Built above fill but beneath Plastered Scarp .. .. ,, 112

PAGE

EXCAVATIONS AT JERICHO, 1955, *contd.*—

PLATE XXI.

1. Trench III. Retaining Wall beneath Plastered Scarp with, right, Small Rooms built against it .. .. ,, 112
2. Trench III. Skeleton of Decapitated Woman on Floor of Small Rooms .. .. ,, 112

PLATE XXII.

1. Burial in Square-shaft Type of Intermediate Early Bronze-Middle Bronze Age Tomb .. .. ,, 112
2. Head of Skeleton in Intermediate Early Bronze-Middle Bronze Age Tomb, with Bronze Band round Skull .. .. .. ,, 112

PLATE XXIII.

1. Neolithic Face-Bead .. .. ,, 112
2. Neolithic Clay Seal .. .. ,, 112

NOTES ON THE BRONZE AGE TOMBS OF JERICHO I

Fig. 1. Plan of the E.B.–M.B. Tomb J 21. Trenches in the Sediments indicated by Parallel Lines. 1. Pottery Lamp. 2 and 3. Jars. 4. Ant-lion Funnels. 4. Termite Corridor .. .. ,, 120

Fig. 2. Vertical Section of the same Tomb, with Soil Section in the Shaft .. .. ,, 120

THE EARLIEST BIBLICAL ALLUSION TO COINED MONEY.

Silver " Purse " from Al-Mina-Sueidia (Actual Size). British Museum .. 150

MESSIANIC SYMBOLS:—

Plate XXIV. Spice-box for the Habdalah Ceremony, showing Symbols of the Jewish Feasts 160

PLATE XXV.

1. Carruca: Stone Carving from Capernaum Synagogue .. .. *facing* 160
2. Bronze Lamp, with Menorah, Ram's Horn, Palm Branch, etc. .. ,, 160

PLATE XXVI.

1. " Gold Glass," with Menorah, Ram's Horns, Palm Branch, etc. (Vatican Museum, Rome) .. .. ,, 112
2. Jewish Coins—
   Left: Mattathias Antigonus (40–37 B.C.) with Menorah;
   Centre: First Revolt (68–69 A.D.), with Cup (of Salvation?), and Branch (of David?);
   Right: Second Revolt (133 A.D.) with Sanctuary surmounted by Star (of Jacob?) and Jar with Vegetation.

PLATE XXVII. " The Light to the Gentiles "; relief from Catacombs of Beth Shearim .. .. ,, 160

PLATE XXVIII.

Menorah with Ram's Horn and Palm Branch .. .. ,, 160
1. Stone Carving from Tiberias: Musée du Louvre .. .. .. ,, 160
2. The Messiah and His Harbinger: Illustration from Venice Haggadah 17th Century .. .. ,, 160

PLATE XXIX.

The Steed of the Messiah ? Catacombs of Beth Shearim .. .. ,, 160
Hebrew Seals. Figs. 1 and 2 183
The Lighter Side of Dig Life 184

PAGE

PLATE XXX.
1. Sunday Relaxation: The Long tramp down the Wadi Qelt 184
2. The Main Channel from the Spring 184
PLATE XXXI.
1. Brown—The Proud Winner 184
2. Black and White was the Problem puppy 184

GENERAL INDEX

1954

Abydos, 91.
Acre, 43.
Amorite pottery, 91.
Aramaic Documents, 2.
Astarte, 43.

Bar-Kokhba, letter, 1.
and Akiba, 23.
Ben Aflul, 29.
Beth Mashko, 24, 25.
Beth-Shan, 76.

David, 10f, 84f.
Dead Sea Scrolls, 101.

Galileans, 25.

Hammurabi, Code of, 8.

Ishtarat, 42.

Jericho, excavations, 45f.
neolothic, 47, 84.
skeletons, 48f.
Bronze Age, 55f, 64f.
Jerusalem, 16f.
Jeshua, 24.

Land, tenure, 5.

Mari, 3, 42.
Megiddo, 95.
Murabba'at, caves, 1.

Noah's Ark, 43.

Patai, Dr. R., 42.
Père de Vaux, 1f.

Ras Shamra, 3, 13, 43, 95.

Samaria, 87f.
Sanhedria, tombs of, 16.

Tell el Hesy, 91.

Qumran, 2, 41, 69.

1955

Abraham, 3.
Aleppo, seal, 183.
Antigonus, 164.
Arabic inscriptions, 55.

Baptist Movement, 45.
Bar-Kokhba, 21.
Beehive Villages, 1.
Beth Shearim, 159.
Boghaz Keui, 2.

Capernaum, synagogue, 155.

El-Karm, 89.
Exodus, 103.

Herod, 104, 164.

Jericho, excavation, 108f.
neolithic, 109f.
chalcolithic, 112f.
Bronze Age, 114f, 118f.
cemetery, 116f.

Mari, 105.
Megiddo, 104.
Menorah, 152f.
Murabba'at, script, 28f.

Nabataean inscriptions, 50f.
Nabataeans, 41f.
Negev, 105.
New Year Festival, 180 f.

Parrot, H., 3, 105.
Paul, St., 36.

Qumran, 3, 34f, 103.

Ras Shamra, 1, 104, 149, 168f.

Shofar, 163.

Thamudic inscriptions, 50f.
Tholoi dwellings, 1.

Zadokites, 36f.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Notes and News	1
Land Tenure in the Old Testament By K. H. Henrey	5
The Tombs of Sanhedria—II By Julius Jotham-Rothschild	16
Bar Kokhba and Akiba By S. A. Birnbaum	23
Reviews and Notices	33

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The Tombs of Sanhedria—II:—

Fig. 1. Greek and Ancient Hebrew Letters		21
Plate I. Tomb I	*facing*	16
Plate II. Tomb III		
Plate III. Tombs X–XIII		
Plate IV		
1. Tomb X		
2. Tomb XIII		
Plate V		
1. Winepress		
2. Water-trough		

A Bar-Kokhba Letter:—

Plate VI. Facsimile of Letter	„	32

(1041) A 2

THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND

NOTES AND NEWS

The exciting discovery by Mr. Lankester Harding and Père de Vaux in the caves of Murabba'at of a letter purporting to be from Simon Bar-Cochba has stirred up a lively controversy concerning its genuineness. Professor Solomon Zeitlin, who since the first appearance of the Dead Sea Scrolls, has not ceased, like a prophet of old, to cry aloud of imposture and of the ignorance of most of the scholars who have ventured to express opinions on the matter, has now, in the J.Q.R. for Oct., 1953, pronounced the letter to be a forgery. His principal ground for this statement is that the letter begins with the preposition *min*, '*from* Simon.' He claims that this use of *min* prefixed to the author's name came into use in the Middle Ages (J.Q.R., XLIV, 2 p. 90). He also says that none of the letters in Cowley's *Aramaic Papyri* exhibits this use of *min*. Doubts as to Professor Zeitlin's omniscience must arise when it is pointed out that Papyrus 8 in Sachau's edition of the Elephantiné Papyri, a letter from the Persian satrap Arsames, begins with the words *min aršam*, ' from Arsames'. The doubt is increased when we discover that in Professor Driver's recent edition of the *Aramaic Documents of the 5th Century B.C.*, whose authenticity is beyond question, the letters there contained all begin with *min* prefixed to the writer's name, Such a glaring mis-statement naturally raises doubts as to the accuracy of other dogmatic assertions made by the sceptical professor.

A preliminary report by Père de Vaux on the exploration of the four caves of Murabba'at is contained in the *Revue Biblique* for April, 1953. The results show that the caves were occupied more or less continuously from the middle of the 4th millennium B.C., up to the middle of the 2nd millennium A.D. The coins found in the caves belong to the times of Nero, Domitian, and Hadrian. Père de Vaux points out that the evidence of the coinage " s'accorde exactement avec les textes retrouvés au même endroit." It would seem thoughtful of the forger to deposit coins which agreed so conveniently with the date of his forged documents. Another important point emphasized by P. de Vaux is that there is no relation whatever between the Qumran finds and the discoveries at Murabba'at. The settlement in the former place was a religious one and all their documents are of a religious nature. The finds from the latter belong to a body of patriots at war with the Romans, and the documents are mainly of a personal and administrative

character. P. de Vaux's closing sentence is worth quoting ; after expressing his opinion that the documents from Qumran are prior to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., he continues : " This latter date is still disputed. It was, however, strikingly supported by the excavation of Khirbet Qumran. . . . It is confirmed by the discoveries at Murabba'at. Here the script is more developed, the biblical text is decidedly Massoretic, from which it must be inferred that the Qumran documents are the more ancient, and that they are anterior to the 2nd century A.D. This is the indirect but weighty contribution which the discoveries of Murabba'at have made to the much discussed problem of the Qumran manuscripts."

It is probably not generally realized how great are the potentialities of the wild regions of the Jordan valley north of the Dead Sea. In March, 1952, an expedition led by Dr. W. Reed, Director of the American School of Oriental Research at Jerusalem, and P. de Vaux, explored a five mile stretch of this wild country, with Khirbet Qumran as the central point. They made no less than 230 fruitless soundings, but 37 caves or holes in the rocks yielded pottery or other remains. In 25 sites the pottery corresponded with that found in the Ain Feshkha cave and at Khirbet Qumran ; six caves, including the first cave at Ain Feshkha, contained manuscript remains. The nature of these later discoveries cannot be fully known until their publication. The most remarkable discovery of this expedition was made in the third cave (classified as 3Q by the discoverers). It consisted of two rolls of copper, the exposed part of which showed in reverse a deeply engraved inscription. The copper was so completely oxidised that it has not yet been possible to unroll either of the scrolls, but chemical experiments are being made by Professor Corwin of Johns Hopkins University which it is hoped may enable them to be unrolled. It is suggested that they are some kind of public notice or list of tariffs. Père de Vaux recalls that in I Macc. viii, 22, we hear of the treaty between the Romans and Judas Maccabaeus being engraved on tables of brass.

It is with very great pleasure that we record the bestowal of the C.B.E. upon Miss Kenyon in the New Year Honours. It is a fitting recognition of her many years of distinguished archaeological labours, which have now reached a climax in the spectacular results of her excavation of Jericho. In a letter from the scene of operations she holds out the promise of even more exciting discoveries than those which have already been made during the first two seasons.

The attention of readers should be drawn to the recent publication by Professor G. R. Driver of an important collection of Aramaic documents of the 5th century B.C. The provenance of these documents is not known, but they were purchased by the late Professor Borchardt in 1931 from a dealer in Egypt, and after his death they came into the possession of the Bodleian

Library. They consist for the greater part of letters from the Persian satrap of the province of Egypt, Arsames, who is almost certainly the Arsames of the well-known Elephantiné Papyri. The letters are addressed to his subordinates in Egypt during his absence in Babylon or Susa, and form a most valuable complement to the information given us by the Elephantiné Papyri concerning Egyptian affairs under the Persian Empire. The book is a very fine piece of scholarly work, and has been most sumptuously produced by the Oxford University Press.

Ras Shamra-Ugarit has not yet ceased to yield exciting discoveries. Professor Schaeffer announces that in October of last year, in the course of his excavations at Ras Shamra, he discovered the diplomatic archives of the kingdom of Ugarit, covering the 14th and 13th centuries B.C. They consist of more than 200 tablets containing treaties and letters exchanged between the Hittite kings, their vassal states, and the kings of Ugarit. When published they will undoubtedly throw fresh light on the history of the ancient Near East during that important period. A further notable discovery was that of a small tablet in Minoan script, being the first example of that script to have been found in Asia. The excavation of Ugarit has already shown that there was a Minoan quarter in the city, and abundant evidence has accumulated of Minoan influence in the decorative arts.

An article in the Israel Exploration Journal, vol. 3, no. 3, is of special interest to the Palestine Exploration Fund in that it is concerned with an inscription whose discovery in Siloam in 1870 was announced in the Quarterly Statement of the Fund for 1871 by the discoverer, the veteran French archaeologist, Clermont Ganneau. He was unable to decipher more than one word with any certainty, and had the inscription (or, to be exact, two inscriptions) cut out and sent to the British Museum, where it has remained undeciphered for more than eighty years. It is mentioned by Dr. Simons in his book *Jerusalem in the Old Testament*, reviewed by Mr. Crowfoot in the previous issue of this journal. Dr. Simons says, "The reading of this much damaged inscription, now in the British Museum, is impossible." However, with the kind assistance of Dr. R. D. Barnett, the Assistant Keeper of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, Mr. N. Avigad, of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, has attempted the impossible, and from a study of fresh photographs and a squeeze has produced a very convincing reading of what is evidently a funerary inscription. He also makes the interesting suggestion that the tomb from which the inscription was removed may be that of Shebna, Hezekiah's vizier, who was so fiercely denounced by Isaiah.

In *Syria*, XXIX, 3–4, M. Parrot tells of the difficulties encountered in resuming operations on the fruitful site of Mari, after an interval of thirteen years. It is good to hear that they have been successfully overcome, and that under M. Parrot's experienced leadership the excavation of Mari will now go

forward. While this, the seventh campaign, has been far from unfruitful, M. Parrot adds in a tantalizing postscript that the eighth campaign, Oct.–Dec., 1953, has yielded spectacular discoveries, for the publication of which we shall look with great expectations.

Mention should be made of the appearance of the Palestine Exploration Fund Annual VI, containing the publication of four tomb groups from Jordan, by Mr. G. Lankester Harding, with contributions by Professor G. R. Driver, Mr. B. S. J. Isserlin, and Miss Olga Tufnell.

The Committee have felt for some time that a need exists in schools and training colleges for more up-to-date news of Biblical research. As a preliminary step to a better understanding of the needs and problems of the teachers, it was decided to ask one of them to address the members, and Mr. A. R. Marsh, B.A., B.D., gave a very helpful summary on " Teaching the Scriptures in the Light of Archaeology " (published in this number?) on January 13th. More and better photographs of sites and discoveries are an obvious need, and the Secretary is, as always, willing to advise where suitable illustrations can best be obtained. The speaker also urged that lecturers should visit the schools wherever possible, and it is indeed hoped that occasional lectures at schools near London will be possible to arrange during the coming winter. Those interested should apply in the first place to the Secretary.

Among the subjects suggested are: Stories of the Creation and Flood; Abraham and his Times; The Egyptians in Syria and Palestine; The Jews in Egypt and the Exodus; The Kingdom of David and Solomon; Assyria and the O.T.; The Babylonian Conquest of Judah and the Exile.

LAND TENURE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

By K. H. Henrey

In *Babylonian Laws*,[1] we read: "The Babylonian mind looks rather to the ownership of the produce than to the ownership of the land". The Hebrew mind, however, was very much concerned with the ownership of the land. The Hebrews had a love of the soil which expressed itself through what we might call "two schools of thought." The one saw the land as belonging to Jahveh, and demanded—in His name—the application of religious and moral considerations to land ownership and transfer. To the other, dealing in land was partly business, partly governed by certain customs (and no doubt laws) which were influenced by those prevailing amongst the surrounding peoples. The two principles were impossible to reconcile, and could only have met through compromise.[2] The O.T. Books represent, in the main, the outlook of the first, or religious party, whose ideas therefore we know in some detail, although we cannot always tell how far those ideas were carried out in practice. Unfortunately we can only deduce what *actually happened* as regards land tenure, especially in connection with the laws and practices of the above mentioned second party, from indirect references, partial descriptions, and words the satisfactory understanding of which demands comparison with their use in other Semitic languages. From all of these, however, together with a study of laws and customs in the neighbouring civilisations, it is possible to build up a picture, however incomplete, of what must have taken place in practice.

The words used for land, and the possession of land, increase with the passing of the centuries covered by the Old Testament. They are few, none the less, and at first (as in every language) have only a very general connotation. Later, some appear to acquire a legal connection, but there is little proof. The terms used by the Old Testament writers in reference to Jahveh's ownership of the land, may have been adopted together with their underlying ideas, from the current usage in which those terms first developed, so becoming applied to religious conceptions.

Private Property.—The passage I Samuel 8, 11–17, represents the Hebrews at the beginning of the monarchy, as a land-owning people,

[1] *Babylonian Laws*, Driver and Miles, Oxford, 1952. Vol. 1, p. 325, note.

[2] This tension between two opposing conceptions of The Land, is very much alive in Israel to-day; cf. *e.g.* Buber, *Israel and Palestine*, The History of an Idea.

working their lands through slave labour.[3] The king takes "the best of your fields and vineyards" and gives them to members of his family[4] and to men who have gained his favour or, as we shall see, on certain conditions of service.[5] Thus the property of the wealthy peasant land-owning class is reduced; it changes hands and goes to swell

(1) The royal domains worked by slave labour and royal overseers,

(2) The fief land over which the king held ultimate right of disposal.

The peasant land-owning class loses also its labour to the royal use. "He will take your men slaves and your women slaves and your goodliest young men . . . and put them to his work." It loses part of its flocks; "he will take 10 per cent. of your flocks," which represent wealth. A movement of dispossession, of slow impoverishment of former free landowners started on the one hand, together on the other hand with the rise of a new rich land-owning class created by the king's grace and favour and built up on the fief system. Many of these impoverished landowners must have ended by migrating to the towns which grew up in Solomon's reign on the foundations of original Canaanite cities, and have been absorbed in the forced labour battalions which worked, amongst other places, on the royal domains.

The Struggle to Survive.

The growing struggle to survive of the former well-off peasant proprietors may be reflected by the development of the ancient idea of the Levirate marriage. Originally dominated by the idea of carrying on the family, or the family group, it appears to include, as laid down in Deuteronomy,[6] the idea of preserving the property within the family: "if brethren dwell together" is interpreted by Driver as two brothers "on the same family estate." The old-established usage, that the eldest son should inherit his father's property (cf. *e.g.* Deuteronomy 21, 15), and the Levirate marriage which provided an opportunity for a son who should inherit in cases where a man died without male issue, had to be further supplemented owing to the loosening of tribal ties, and the increasing tendency of land to pass into hands other than those of the family. In Numbers 27, 1–12, the legalisation of a new custom is recorded in the form of a story, whereby a

[3] Cf. *e.g. Nabal*, I Samuel 25, 2. "a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats". Cf. also, *Elisha* who was "ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen" (I Kings 19, 19). The families of *Saul* and *David* themselves must have been owners of considerable land (cf. I Samuel 9, 1). As witness to slaves, cf. Nabal's words: "there be many slaves now a days that break away every man from his master". (v. 10.)

[4] *Absalom* was a big landowner; cf. the setting of the story of the murder of Amnon, II Samuel 13, 23–29; cf. also II Samuel 14, 30. "(Absalom) said unto his slaves, See *Joab's* field is near mine, and he hath barley there . . .".

[5] Examples given in sections below.

[6] Deuteronomy 25, 5.

daughter might inherit in the event of there being no son. This new custom, however, still lay within the framework of the old tribal conceptions of the unity of the tribe, and the inalienability of inherited property. Land must remain within the family or the clan. " Why should the name of our father be excluded from the family group because he had no son ? " The laws of inheritance were considerably widened, and relatives were named who could inherit in order of right. A supplement to this ordinance occurs in Numbers 36, where it is recognized that should a daughter marry into another tribe (as doubtless increasingly happened), the land would pass out of the possession of her father's tribe into that of her husband. She is therefore required to marry within her own tribe. We do not know how far these customs and ordinances were observed in practice, or how far they represented the fighting of a losing battle.

This struggle is again reflected by the selling of children as slaves.[7] In II Kings 4 is the story of the widow who, because she cannot pay her debts, may have to sell her two sons as slaves to her creditor. The small landowner could live only off his land and its proceeds. The loss of sons represented further diminution of free labour which in its turn was absorbed by the new wealthy class or by the royal levies. This widespread social and economic change, the passing of the land into the hands of a small wealthy class which must have been often disinterested and even " absentee ", the diminution of free labour on the land and the vast increase of a " slave labour " with no independent means of subsistence, were fiercely opposed by the prophets and their school of thought[8] who clearly saw the social and ethical evil involved, but had no constructive economic policy whereby to ease the passage from a primitive society to a complex and commercialised society. This lies at the back of such an occurrence as the clash between Ahab and Naboth.

The Practice of Adoption.

C. J. Gadd, in his article on the *Tablets from Kirkuk*,[9] which deal with Hurrite Land Laws, gives the translation of a number of documents (for which he suggests as approximate dating the latter half of the 14th century) which deal with the class of records called *Titennutu*, and a few of which are Deeds of Adoption. These transactions are described by Rachel Clay[10] as " a kind of blend of loan, exchange and sale " which show

[7] Cf. Montgomery and Gehman, *Kings* I.C.C., p. 366. " The Hebrew law permitted the " selling " of wife and children as chattels for debt (Ex. 21, 7; Amos 2, 6; 8, 6; Is. 50, 1), the practice lasting till after the Exile (Neh. 5)."

[8] Cf. Isaiah 5, 8. " Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place . . ." also Micah 2, 1–3. " They covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress . . . a man and his heritage."

[9] R.A. XXIII, 1926, pp. 49–161.

[10] R. Clay, *Tenure of Land in Babylonia and Assyria.*

> " how the small landowner probably in times of economic distress could only support himself by borrowing on the security of his land or the person of his son who was bound to serve the ' creditor ' till the agreement came to an end. If he wanted to raise still more money he would then have to adopt the ' creditor ' and his family would be permanently deprived of their ancestral estate."

As an example of the sale of a daughter which may bear comparison with Exodus 21, 7–11, the document numbered 35 (p. 114) is of interest.

> " Mustea gave his daughter Aste . . . to Wullu for adoption, and thus did Mustea say to Wullu . . . ' Give my daughter Aste to wife either to thy son or in the gate; the silver for her I declare I have accepted . . . ' "

No. 59 is an example of adoption, whereby land is given up to the adopted " son " who in his turn pays silver to his adopted " father ".

> " . . . Tai, son of Uad-ili, has adopted Tehib-tilla . . . 1 imer 2 epinnu of land . . . he has given to Tehib-tilla as his portion, and Tehib-tilla has given 1 mina of silver as a present to him . . . "

Driver and Miles,[11] discussing the references to *adoption* in the Code of Hammurabi, give a number of reasons for the practice, *e.g.*, to acquire a son to perpetuate the family, to continue a business, and to maintain the adopter in old age. They add, however, that the motives must often have been mixed. " Further, in a Middle-Babylonian deed from Nuzi[12] the purpose of the adoption seems to be that the adoptee shall feed and clothe the adopter so long as he lives and bury him, and that, having married his daughter . . . he shall inherit his property. . . ."

In regard to the practice amongst the Hebrews, the two editors note that there are no laws of adoption in the Pentateuch, but suggest that there may be a reference to it " where Jacob says to Joseph[13] ' and now thy two sons . . . are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh, even as Reuben and Simeon, shall be mine ', and where it is said of Moses[14] that ' he became her son ', *i.e.*, the son of Pharaoh's daughter ". In a footnote they add: " Possibly also Naomi adopted Ruth's son Obed (Ruth 4, 16–17) ".

In a note on the reference in Ruth, " And the women said unto Naomi (about the child) . . . he shall be unto thee a restorer of life, and a nourisher of thine old age . . . And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom (חֵיק bosom or lap), and became nurse unto it.". A. R. S. Kennedy[15] says: " Naomi's action here suggests a formal act of adoption ".

[11] *Babylonian Laws*, Vol. I, pp. 383–385.
[12] Gadd in R.A. XXIII, pp. 126–7, 51.
[13] *Genesis* 48, 5–6.
[14] *Exodus* 2, 10.
[15] *The Book of Ruth*, A. R. S. Kennedy, S.P.C.K., London, 1937.

Communal Property.—In a study of land tenure in Old Testament times, we must note the question of the existence of *communal land* or property owned by a community such as a village, or by a group of related families (the two being, as frequently happens in the Near East to-day, practically synonymous).[16] Communal land must have been the primitive practice. A given area would be occupied by a tribe, or part of a tribe, and then divided by lot and, or, measured out, each family or a few members of a family being allotted a section. The whole area would remain none the less " common " property to be redivided by lot when occasion demanded.

Much the same must have happened in Canaan as happened in Babylonia at the time of the Aramaean invasions. Miss Clay, writing on the system of tribal land rights introduced in the Kassite period,[17] says: "A tribe was usually established in a district, but it could occupy several towns and the land of the tribe would be divided between the different towns and villages. It seems improbable that the land was exploited collectively, but possibly by groups of members of the tribe, with families or individuals each cultivating a part ".

The practice must have continued late in the history of the Hebrews (although probably ever smaller groups were involved), since it appears to underlie such references as Micah 2, 5, and to have become absorbed into religious thought, as in Psalm 16, 5–6. We cannot tell what was the connection between communal land and privately owned land although, as we have seen, the general development of property ownership was along the lines of big private properties. Out of the practice of communal land, however, linked as it was with the ideal of the sacred duty of preserving property within the family, arose two of the most vital conceptions in Hebrew religious thought; *i.e.*, that of the *Go'el*, the " kinsman-redeemer " (this idea has been fully studied in a number of scholarly works),[18] and that of Jahveh as the true owner of the land which He divides amongst His people on condition that they keep His law.

An interesting record of the purchase of family land by a member of the family is given in Jeremiah 32, 6 ff. describing how the prophet bought his cousin's property in Anathoth. The description may be paraphrased as follows: And he (Hanamel) said to me: Buy my property (שׂדי) which is at Anathoth, in the district of Benjamin, for you have the right of possession[19] (משפט הירשה) and yours is the right of redemption (הגאליה). Buy it for yourself. . . . And I bought the property in Anathoth from Hanamel, my cousin, and I weighed out the silver to him, seven silver

[16] See *e.g.* F. P. W. Buhl, *Die socialen Verhältnisse der Israeliten.* Berlin, 1899. M. Lurje, *Studien zur Geschichte der Wirtschaftlichen und socialen Verhältnisse im Israelitisch-Jüdischen Reiche.* Giessen, 1927.

[17] Tenure of Land in Babylonia and Assyria. p. 17.

[18] See *e.g.* David Daube, *Studies in Biblical Law.* Cambridge, 1947.

[19] Note the apparently legal use of the word ירשה cf. apparently legal use in I Kings 21, 16.

shekels and ten. And I entered it in the deed (or contract, or register הספר), and I sealed it, and I called witnesses and I weighed the silver in the scales. And I took the deed (or contract) which was sealed, the rules and conditions of sale and the record of the boundaries[20] of the property, and that which was (copied) on the outside. And I gave the deed to Baruch in the presence of Hanamel and in the presence of the witnesses who had signed the deed in the presence of all the Jews sitting in the courtyard. And I charged Baruch, saying: Take these records, the sealed-up contract and the copy outside, and put the whole thing in an earthen vessel; that they may last a long time. For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land.

In Babylonia and Assyria, deeds and contracts were inscribed on tablets of clay which were baked hard. These were then inserted in envelopes of clay likewise baked hard after a copy of the deed had been inscribed on the outside. It is likely that this custom was adopted in Judah and Israel with this difference, however, that in place of baked clay, leather rolls were used (cf. G. R. Driver, *Semitic Writing*, pp. 83, 84).

Professor Daube, discussing possible early notions in connection with the transfer of land, suggests that there may have been a time when the ownership of land was transferred by one party pointing out the property and the other seeing it, similarly by a man stepping on the land[21] or lying on it. He continues, however, "Whether *Hebrew law* actually recognised all these forms of acquisition . . . some of them, or even none, is quite uncertain." On the above story in Jeremiah, he writes: " accounts like that of Jeremiah's acquisition of land are fundamentally different: they contain, or at any rate are meant to contain, the *true law* of the time . . . " (my italics).[22]

Royal Lands.—Right from the beginning of the monarchy, land was passing into the king's hands.

1. It was confiscated from conquered enemies, whether opponents at home or foreign.

An example is furnished by the story of Meribaal (Mephibosheth). Meribaal, as son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul, would in the natural course of things have received and enjoyed an inheritance of land. When however his family lost the throne to David, the latter arrogated the right to dispose of his predecessor's property. Because of his friendship for Jonathan, he returned to Meribaal his inheritance, but it is returned *as of the King's grace*, and not as of right.[23]

[20] חקים - חק is found in Late and Modern Hebrew with the meaning of a prescribed limit, or boundary.

[21] Is there a reference to such a custom in Joshua 18, 4? " Appoint for you three men for each tribe: and I will send them, and they shall arise, and walk through the land, and describe it according to their inheritance . . ." cf. also vv. 8–10.

[22] David Daube, *Studies in Biblical Law*, pp. 37–39.

[23] II Samuel 9, 7.

When Meribaal is, rightly or wrongly, charged with treason before the king by Ziba, David takes the land back from Meribaal and gives it to Ziba.[24] But the story as told is very sketchy, and the land may have constituted a kind of "royal fief", occupation of which was forfeited by treason. It is worth noting that Meribaal is not reported as objecting to the injustice of losing his land *per se*, but to the injustice of the charge of treason. When he disclaims this charge, David redistributes the land, dividing it getween Meribaal and Ziba.[25] Thus Ziba, instead of being merely an overseer under Meribaal, may have been raised to the status of a king's vassal, the land remaining a royal fief.

In I Samuel, 27, is an interesting example of property first acquired by the House of Judah as land held in fief to a foreign ruler. Saul is king and seeking to destroy David as a dangerous rival. The latter keeps out of danger by taking refuge with the Philistine lord, Achish, king of Gath. David asks for a property of his own, and is given Ziklag. But apparently David is to hold it as fief-land, for not only does he undertake periodic raids on the Philistine's enemies (as he gives Achish to believe), but the latter demands information as to where David has been and what he has done. David accepts the questions as legitimate. With David's accession to the throne and eventual success over the Philistines, Ziklag becomes part of the Crown domains.[26]

The confiscation of private property by the Crown is reflected in the Religious Party's charge against the Royalty put into the mouth of Samuel, I Samuel 8, 12–17.

2. Land was exchanged for some other commodity of greater immediate need. Thus Hiram, king of Tyre, obtained land and villages from Solomon in exchange for gold.[27]

3. It was bought by the king from ordinary subjects on occasion. Omri bought the Hill of Samaria for two talents of silver. Ahab expected to be able to buy Naboth's vineyard and made a fair commercial offer.[28]

The Hofshi

In the story of Meribaal, there is nothing to lead us to suppose that, apart from loyalty, any special conditions were attached to the occupancy of the land; although there is actually no proof of the contrary either. But the story of David and Achish introduces the possible existence in Judah and Israel of the Hofshi; the vassal, the man who in the surrounding civilisations was granted land on condition that he performed certain services to the Crown, and who forfeited that land on failure to comply with those

[24] II Samuel 16, 1–4.
[25] II Samuel 19, 24–30.
[26] I Samuel 27, 5–10.
[27] I Kings 9, 11–14.
[28] I Kings 16, 23 and I Kings 21. Cf. "Where the vendor did not particularly want to sell, but the purchaser urgently needed the land, a small extra payment was made". *Tenure of Land in Babylonia and Assyria.* Clay, p. 15.

requirements.[29] Unfortunately, direct references to any conditions under which land was held in the Hebrew kingdoms are so slight that very little can be deduced with any certainty; but there are indirect references which support the supposition that the institution of the Hofshi was established and recognised. The only passage where we are justified in reading this meaning into the word is in I Samuel 17, 25. In return for slaying the king's enemy, the hero is to be enriched by the king who will make his household *Hofshi*, probably with a fief of land which may be passed down from father to son.[30] The story of the Shunamite woman appears to embody references to such holding of land, although unfortunately it raises more questions than it answers.

The Shunamite woman first appears in II Kings 4 where she is the wife of a man in possession of sufficient land to keep them in comfort and position. She has a son. In II Kings 8 she reappears, evidently a widow. We are probably justified in deducing that the land now belongs to her son to whom she is acting as guardian until he be of age. Owing to a famine, she takes her household into the " land of the Philistines ", and temporarily deserts the property. When they return they find that the property is no longer theirs, and the one to whom they must apply is the king. Gehazi presents their case so sympathetically that the king's interest is aroused; both the woman and her son are brought before him, and he—the king—decides that the land is to be returned to them.

The possibilities here are that the land was a fief granted to the male line of the family, probably on condition that certain services were performed to the Crown (what services, of course, we have no means of knowing), and that if the father died the land passed to the son who forfeited possession by prolonged absence.[31]

The Joseph Story

Professor S. H. Hooke wrote in *In the Beginning*:

> " there is nothing in the Joseph story itself to give us any guidance as to the period of Egyptian history in which the events there recorded took place. It seems most probable that the narrator . . . has used a popular folk-story with a motive very common in the East to form the

[29] See Knudtzon, *Die El-Amarna Tafeln.* See Index. Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws. Legal Commentary.* Driver and Miles, *Assyrian Law Code.* Virolleaud, *Légende de Keret.* p. 38, 1, 90. Pedersen, *J.P.O.S.* VI, 1926, p. 104, " landed proprietor ". Albright, *Canaanite Hapsi and Hofsi again.* " serf ". I. Mendelsohn, *Canaanite Term for Free Proletarian,* B.A.S.O.R. No. 83, Oct., 1941. " colonus ".

[30] Cf. Clay, *Tenure of Land in Babylonia and Assyria.* " soldiers also received a fief on condition of service . . ." p. 12.

[31] " It was the king's constant care to see that the legal cases went not to the Temple courts but came before his administrators, and the king's ultimate authority in all judicial proceedings is evident. There are many cases of direct appeal to the king, he could pronounce judgement or refer a dispute to the local council." *Tenure of Land in Babylonia and Assyria.* Clay, p. 13.

basis of a story which provides an explanation for the Hebrew tradition of a sojourn in Egypt. . . ."

My purpose in introducing the story here is that a Hebrew (and Canaanite) system of land holding is projected by the narrator into an Egyptian environment. In Genesis 47 the ruler, Pharaoh, instructs Joseph to settle his father and brothers on land, in return for which they are to serve as overseers of the royal cattle.[32] In other words, the Crown endows with fief-land on conditions of service.[33]

PRIESTS' LAND.—It appears from some of the Ras Shamra texts that a number of trades and professions were organised in guilds which owned land. The use and cultivation of the land were leased out to cultivators; we are not told whether rent was paid in money or in crops. The usual custom prevailing in the Near East would suggest the latter. Amongst these guilds were those of the priests.[34]

[32] See *Babylonian Laws*. Vol. I. Driver and Miles. 1952, pp. 112 ff.

"Certain services, called a 'going' (Bab. ilkum), determined by the nature of their trades, or professions, were tendered to the crown; in return for them the king made grants of corn and land, . . . and it was the duty of the royal officers to assign such land to the beneficiary in accordance with the grant made to him."

"In the Sumerian period the UKUS was attached not only to the king but also to various high civil and ecclesiastical officers of state and even to individual cities."

"Sometimes the work (*i.e.* the service given) was neither that of a soldier nor of a constable . . . they work on the land . . . in *connection with cattle* . . . where work has to be done on a canal which has been stopped up."

[33] Cf. also "If anyone occupies fields as a grant from the king he shall not render the feudal dues; the king shall take bread from the table and give it to him." Hittite Laws. E. Neufeld. Section 47. Cf. Genesis 47, 12 also II Samuel 9, 10.

[34] *Rôle des corporations.*

"Le fait nouveau et fort important est le rôle de propriétaire que jouent ces corporations. Dans un seul texte (I, R.Š. 11858), onze . . . sont mentionnées comme possédant des domaines ('ubdy) dont les champs sont affectés à telle ou telle personne. La corporation jouit d'une possession définitive, perpétuelle (arabe: abadiyy); elle délègue l'usage temporaire des divers champs . . . la tablette (R.Š. 11858) note le transfert de tel et tel champ, d'un personnage à un autre. . . .

. . . L'organisation de la population cananéenne en Ugarit présente deux formes. . . .

1. Certains groupes, venus de Palestine, qui resteront assez cohérents pour garder le nom du village dont ils étaient originaires.

2. Des éléments d'origine diverse . . . qui ont trouvé dans la corporation un lien puissant parcequ'à sa tête est placé un chef (rab). . . . L'activité de la corporation des prêtres en tant que propriétaire terrienne est attestée par le lot d'herminettes avec inscription. . . .

Il est naturel de supposer que les personnes à qui l'on attribue une terre soient redevables à la corporation d'une somme déterminée ou d'un des produits de la terre." R. Dussaud. *Syria*, XXII, p. 101.

See *Syria*, XX, p. 285. XXI, pp. 148, 247. List of towns and corporations.

See also, de Langhe, *Textes de Ras Shamra - Ugarit*, Tome II, p. 378. "L'organisation corporative à Ugarit". *Revue d'Assyriologie*. XXXVII. 1 and 2, 1940. pp. 11–44.

There is evidence in the Old Testament that amongst the Hebrews, a number of trades and professions were organised in guilds, but the evidence is indirect.[35] There is no mention of priestly guilds. The "cities" of the Levites, their "fields" and "suburbs" (grazing land?), may have represented land held in common by groups, by a guild. The early sanctuaries appear to have owned property; indeed such land must have furnished part of their living (supplemented by gifts and their share of the sacrifices), in the same way as the bulk of the population lived by, and off, small properties.[36] In Leviticus 25, 32–34, we are told that the "field of the suburbs of their cities" (*i.e.*, of the Levites) was inalienable, which would mean that such property belonged to a group, and not to individuals.[37] Levitical "city" property could be sold, but it carried a perpetual right of redemption. Vowed property constituted one source of land to sanctuaries, or priests. Lev. 27, 20–21.[38]

When the local sanctuaries fell into disrepute, and efforts were made to centralise worship in Jerusalem, provision was made for priests who left the country for the city; they were to be supplied with food—they would no

[35] For Guilds in Ancient Palestine. See I. Mendelsohn. *B.A.S.O.R.* No. 80.

[36] *Numbers* 35, 1–8. Levites allotted cities to dwell in, and the surrounding land:

"Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and suburbs for the cities round about them. . . . And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and their suburbs shall be for their cattle, and for their substance, and for all their beasts."

Note in *Joshua* 21, 11–12.

". . . They gave them Kiriath-arba . . . with the suburbs thereof round about it . . ."

"But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, gave they to Caleb."

Joshua 21, 1–3.

"Then came near the heads of the fathers of the Levites unto Eleazar the priest, and unto Joshua . . . and unto the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel; . . . saying, The Lord commanded to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle . . . and the children of Israel gave unto the Levites . . . these cities with their suburbs."

[37] *Leviticus* 25, 32–34.

"The cities of the Levites, the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time. . . . for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel.

But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold: for it is their perpetual possession . . ."

אחזת עולם—perpetual possession. Cf. the Ugaritic corporation, which enjoyed "perpetual possession" of its landed property. M. René Dussaud, in his review of *Textes administratifs de Ras Shamra*, by M. Virolleaud (*Revue d' Assyriologie*, XXXVII, 1–2, 1940), understands the Ugaritic *'ubdy* as meaning *perpetual*. He writes: "Dans un seul texte, (I, R.Ś. 11858), onze de ces corporations sont mentionnées comme possédant des domaines ('ubdy) . . . la corporation jouit d'une possession définitive, perpétuelle (arabe: abadiyy) . . ." *Syria*, XXII, p. 101.

[38] *Leviticus* 27, 20–21.

". . . If he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more: but the field, when it goeth out in the jubilee shall be holy unto the Lord, as a field devoted; *the possession thereof shall be* the *priest's*."

longer have any land. But they were also to have " that which cometh of the sale of their patrimony."[39]

As time went by, gifts and vows seem to have been increasingly paid in money rather than in kind, no doubt resulting from the centralisation of the priests in the city away from the villages, and from the growth of a commercial class which would not deal in agricultural produce. The priestly income described in II Kings 12, 1–22, seems to have been represented by money.

[39] Levites to have no inheritance, provision made for those who leave the country and go to Jerusalem :

Deuteronomy 18, 1–9.

" The priests the Levites, all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion nor inheritance with Israel . . . they shall have no inheritance among their brethren: . . . The first fruits of thy corn, of thy wine shalt thou give him. . . . And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel where he sojourneth, . . . unto the place which the Lord shall choose; then he shall minister . . . They shall have like portions to eat . . . beside that which cometh of *the sale of his patrimony*." (some source of income other than that of the sanctuary land ?).

THE TOMBS OF SANHEDRIA—II

By Julius Jotham-Rothschild

In my first article on the Tombs of Sanhedria which was published in the *PEQ*, January–April 1952 issue, I dealt mainly with the tombs now accessible, namely, Tombs V, VI and VII, which belong to one group, Tombs XVIII, XIX and XX, which belong to a second group, and Tombs XVII, IX, XIV, XV and XVI, which are single family tombs worked into cliffs of lesser extent of surface. To the single tombs also belong Tombs I, II and III, and those found on the hill opposite the ancient Sanhedria cemetery called *Khallat el-majnûn*, i.e., the Field of the Insane, south of the Wadi *Umm-l-Amîd* which still wait to be examined. These solitary tombs are found mainly where the ancient quarries form an angle, the area within the angle being used as a forecourt. Tomb I (Pl. I) is situated near the new Sanhedria cemetery which originated during the 1948 Jewish-Arab war, in a corner where the road to the Pagi Quarter branches off the old Nebi Samuel Road. Tomb II forms the basement of a house of the Mahanaim Quarter. The entrance to the tomb is buried in rubbish and invisible but is marked by a sculptured frame of a *cyma recta*. Tomb III (Pl. II) is situated at the right of the road which leads to the ancient Sanhedria cemetery, the continuation of the Nebi Samuel road. The portal which is *c.* 4·50 metres wide and 2·50 metres high is very imposing and was cut into a cliff flanked by two fairly high rocks forming a forecourt of about 500 square metres. The other tombs which in former times could be seen at the left side of the Nebi Samuel Road have since been filled up with earth so that their fine ornamented architraves have entirely disappeared, but could easily be dug out if the necessary funds could be found. The aforementioned three tombs are still inaccessible because of the débris which has accumulated inside.

Of great interest are Tombs X, XI, XII and XIII (Pl. III) which can be seen north-east of Tomb XIV, the traditional Tomb of the Judges, at a distance of about 50 metres. These four ancient Jewish family tombs were cut into a vertical cliff some 60 metres long and about 3 metres high consisting of a hard crystalline Melekke stone. Each of the four tombs had originally a vestibule in front of the entrance to the central tomb chamber, but the vestibule of Tomb XI has been completely destroyed in antiquity by stone cutters using it for quarrying. They used the same method as at Tomb V cutting square stones directly from the living rock using long chisels and a hammer. The portals are plain without any embellishment, Tomb XII still showing the vestiges of ancient quarrying. Tomb X is remarkable as it has a cistern at the right of the vestibule which

Tomb I.

Tomb III.

Tombs X–XIII.

1. Tomb X.

2. Tomb XIII.

2. Water-trough.

1. Winepress.

got its water from the higher up area in winter time which collected in a cavity and ran along an oblique rock-cut channel into the vestibule the floor of which slopes slightly and lets the water flow into the cistern through its mouth which is wide and high enough for a person to enter. This system works still as it did two thousand years ago. The water which collects in the cistern is unfit for drinking, dirty and full of aquatic plants, the ideal breeding-place for mosquitoes and other insects. For what purpose this cistern was designed it is hard to say. It is impossible to believe that it was always as dirty as it is to-day; it was certainly cleaned every summer before the rain started by the family to which the tomb belonged. Like the two cisterns in the outer court of the Tomb of the Kings it was probably used for ritual baths by people who had visited the tomb or for washing the corpses before they were laid to rest in the *kokhin*. Now its water may be useful for the gardener to water the plants of the newly arranged garden which spreads in front of the four tombs.

When I visited this area some forty-eight years ago it was a desert with a few patches of soil here and there sown with wheat, barley, or sesame. As I was wont, when young, to ramble over the hills and dales of Jerusalem in search of something exciting or just to admire the millions of lovely flowers, crocuses, anemones, and wild orchids which, for a short time, transform the desert into a multi-coloured flower-garden, I came upon the spot where the aforementioned four antique Jewish tombs can be seen. On such a sunny day I was sitting on a rock not far from the tombs watching an Arab ploughing his field with a donkey and a camel, neither of them ever in line with each other, the weaker having to work harder than the strong, which Jewish law strictly forbids. When the Arab lifted his plough to walk home with his tired and hungry beasts I observed something glittering bright yellow in the sun. When he was out of sight I went over to the spot and picked up what was to my great surprise a fairly big coin of pure gold. It appeared to be a dinar from early Mamluke time which somebody with a hole in his pocket had lost some seven hundred years ago.[1] This lucky find was the cause of my frequent visits in later years, and led to many interesting discoveries, mainly antique Jewish tombs which abound in this area.

Searching for inscriptions, grafitti and others which are so rare on ancient Jewish tombs—golden dinars being even more rare in our times—I missed some things of equal value which excited me even more than that single coin. Until lately I had visited Sanhedria mainly in the morning when the shadow covers all four tombs but this time I went in an afternoon when the tombs can be seen in bright sunlight. I had not come near the cliff when I noticed from afar clearly and unmistakably several crosses carved from the rock close to the portal of Tomb X. These were the first crosses I had ever seen on ancient Jewish tombs in that area. As they are

[1] Now in the Museum of the American University, Beirut.

of the same bluish grey colour caused by weathering as the cliff and are covered by the same kind of lichen found on the surface, they could not be seen except in the afternoon when the sunlight falls obliquely on the vertical cliff. I had seen crosses at the entrances of antique Jewish tombs which Greek hermits had converted into hermitages in the Hinnom valley, but never had I seen the sign of the cross of such antiquity as those I saw in Sanhedria. I examined every tomb in that area very carefully and counted three tombs out of twenty-one with crosses, Tomb X with three crosses left and close to the portal (Pl. IV, 1), Tomb XIII with one cross in the centre of the portal (Pl. IV, 2), and one cross on top of the entrance of Tomb V which leads directly into the central chamber. The crosses of Tombs X and XIII are all more or less of the same size, each arm about 10 centimetres long, while the cross in Tomb V is somewhat smaller, measuring 15 centimetres in length and width. The marks of the chisel used can still be seen. Some are well preserved, others have lost a bit of their original sharpness. Judging from their crude and unequal condition and treatment they must have been cut by an unskilled person who had not even cared for a clear and correct design.

The question which troubled me from the first day I saw these crosses is: who cut these crosses, when, and for what purpose?

The tombs are Jewish family tombs dating from before 70 A.D. There is no doubt about that. They show the same chambers as the other antique tombs of Sanhedria, the same arrangement of the *kokhin*, and the same dressing of the walls. The entrances to the tomb chambers do not differ in size and execution from those of the other tombs (0·57 metre in width and 0·70 metre in height on an average), the plan and execution conform to the rules laid down in the Talmud (Bab. b, 6, 8). Rock-cut tombs showing the sign of the cross have frequently been found in the vicinity of Jerusalem but they have all proved to be Christian, dating from Byzantine times. The tombs at the southern side of the Hinnom valley lost their original characteristics when the hermits started to build their *Laurae*. They cut large openings into the rock-wall to be able to enter and leave in a normal way, destroying the former low and narrow square holes through which the corpse was pushed. They often destroyed the *kokhin* and the stone-benches on which the Jews in former times used to place the coffins, while the *arcosolia* served as shelves for their meagre belongings, lamps, jars, dishes and other articles. Then they marked the new hermitage by carving or painting a cross over the door.

In 1885 a vast *hypogeum* with many rock-cut tombs was discovered north-west of the so-called Jeremias Grotto and was measured and examined by the late Dr. C. Schick.[1] Here also crosses were found carved in relief from the rock. The sarcophagi carved from the rock, similar to the trough-

[1] *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palaestina Vereins*, vol. IX, 74.

shaped receptacles which we find in Jewish tombs of the first centuries of our era in the vicinity of Jerusalem and in Galilee were the same as those discovered in the property of the Dominican fathers at St. Stephen's, and those found in the so-called Garden Tomb near Gordon's Calvary. But they are Christian, not Jewish. In fact no Jewish tombs were ever found in the area between the present northern city-wall and the Tomb of the Kings. The first antique Jewish tombs we meet in this area are farther north outside the ruins of the Third Wall which, before 70 A.D., protected the northern suburbs of Jerusalem. The cemetery which in 1941 was discovered in my presence south of and close to the American Colony proved to be Roman. Here sunken tombs were found in long rows with broken vessels dating from the time of Hadrian when Jerusalem was a Roman camp. The Crusader cemetery was also north of the city in the proximity of the Byzantine burial ground. From what has been said above we see, and facts have confirmed, that all the rock-cut tombs with or without crosses found in this area are Christian and date from Byzantine times. Their similarity to the Jewish tombs of the 1st century A.D. only proves that the early Christians adopted from the Jews the custom of burying in subterranean tomb-chambers. The Jews in turn had been influenced by Phoenician, Greek, and Roman, and earlier by Egyptian custom. It therefore did not come as a surprise to me when I found in the shaft of the vestibule of Tomb XIV and in one of the side-chambers of Tomb VII rock-cut sarcophagi similar to the early Christian tombs found north of the old city.

But all this does not solve the riddle of the crosses which I discovered on Tombs V, X and XIII of Sanhedria. First I was of the opinion that Christian hermits had in the first centuries of our era occupied these tombs, but after careful consideration I changed my mind. The tomb-chambers are quite unfit for human habitation; they are pitch dark, have no ventilation and can be entered only under great difficulties, as the old entrances to the tomb chambers are so narrow and low that even a corpse could only be pushed in with great difficulty. Any visitor wanting to go in has to lie on his back and slip in feet first, and has to be careful not to bruise his skull. The air inside is constantly foul and breathing difficult. To prevent wild animals entering at night the entrance had to be closed, and anyone sleeping inside would certainly have fainted for lack of oxygen. Secondly there is no source of fresh water, nor a closed cistern to be found in the whole area, and to fetch water from a distance would not have been practical. There are plenty of other caves in the vicinity of Jerusalem which could provide better living conditions, often in the neighbourhood of a well or cistern.

Food also had to be brought from far away from Jerusalem, from Lifta, Beit Iqsa, or Beit Hanina, which are nearest to Sanhedria. All these many difficulties rule out the possibility that the crosses were the work of hermits.

There remains, then, only one possibility which, I believe, solves the problem, namely, that early Christians, descendants of the Jewish owners of Tombs V, X and XIII, and in possession of a title-deed inherited from their

forefathers, had been buried in the family-tomb, that the two (or more, now obliterated by weathering) crosses at the left of the portal of Tomb X mean that two (or more) Hebrew-Christians were laid to rest in the two (or more) *kokhin* at the left of the tomb-chamber and that, where a cross was carved in the centre of the portal, as on Tombs XIII and V, all *kokhin* were occupied by Neo-Christians. A find which corroborates my assumption was made in Tomb V where I found pieces of a small metal cross in one of the *kokhin*.

The date of these burials is a separate question. All evidences seem to prove that we have here the earliest crosses known in history. They date, as I believe, from the time between the middle of the IInd century A.D. to the middle of the IIIrd when the rift between those Jews who believed in Jesus from Nazareth and those who did not was still insignificant. We find adherents of Jesus (calling him master and not Messias) amongst the Jews mentioned as מינים in the Talmud beside the Ebionites (from אביון meaning " poor "), a sect which probably perished or migrated to Babylonia during the persecution of the Christians by Diocletian in 303 A.D. They are again mentioned in the Habakkuk scroll discovered in 1947 in a cave on the western shore of the Dead Sea where they probably dwelt amongst the Essenes.

It seems that during the troublous years which preceded the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. members of a Jewish family who did not share the religious views of their father and left the fold to join one or the other of the various sects, nevertheless remained Jews with full rights civic and private. They never lost their right " to sleep with their fathers " in the common family tomb. They would rise together on the Day of Resurrection to guarantee each other before the Supreme Judge. Not to be buried in the family tombs was considered a disgrace (I Kings XIII, 22; Ez. XXXII, 27 Gen. XLVII, 29, etc.). That, in my opinion, explains the crosses on these ancient Jewish tombs.

Opposite Tomb XIII a well-preserved winepress can be seen hewn from the rock which seems to be older than the tombs (Pl. V, 1). It has been cut in a different manner from the tombs, but similar to the cliff. The press (Hebr. גת) consists of two basins, a higher and a lower basin. They are connected by a round hole, near which a piece of brass could be seen in the shape of a nail. The grapes were put into the upper basin and crushed by a man with his feet. The juice ran through the aforementioned hole into the lower basin from which the *pithoi* were filled and carried home to ferment. As the press is one with the surrounding rock it must date from the time when the quarries were arranged in this area, i.e., in the time of the Maccabees, otherwise the presence of a wine-press in a cemetery which the ancient Jews considered unclean cannot be explained. It cannot date from a later period as all wine-presses dating from the first centuries of our era and later are quite different and far more primitive.

Another discovery I made in Sanhedria was a graffito on the left pilaster of Tomb XIV (Tomb of the Judges) consisting of a number of Greek and ancient Hebrew letters (Fig. 1). Unfortunately I had no chemicals and instruments to remove the crust of lichens and other stuff to make the missing letters readable. The lower lines seem to be mediaeval Hebrew.

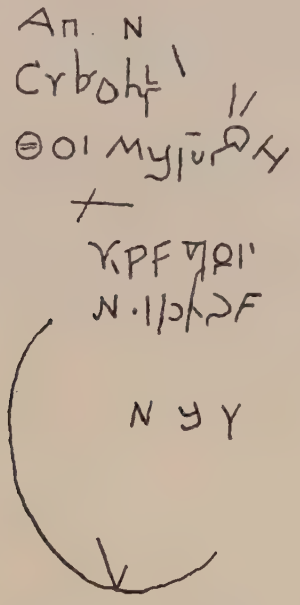


Fig. 1. Greek and ancient Hebrew letters.

A new road has been built from the end of the Nebi Samuel Road to Sanhedria which runs parallel with the Roman road connecting Jerusalem with Caesarea via Lod (*Diospolis*) and *Antipatris*. Judging from the numerous ruins of khans (caravanserais) the traffic along this road must have been considerable in the Middle Ages. It was the road which the Crusaders used, and was protected by the castle on *Mons Gaudii* (Nebi Samwil), the minaret of which still serves as a landmark. Later the fellaheen from Beit Iksa, Bir Naballa, and Beit Hanina, used the road when bringing their agricultural products to the bazaars of Jerusalem. They usually stopped at Sanhedria to water their horses, mules, donkeys and camels at Tomb IX, which they had converted into a cistern by deepening the floor of the single tomb chamber which is now twice as deep as it was originally. The *kokhin* at the back and the *arcosolium* at the left, the first having been level with the floor, can now be seen half-way between floor and ceiling. Much as we regret the mutilation of Tomb IX by the Arabs, we cannot help admiring their well-calculated plan because it worked. The tomb-chamber-cistern

received plenty of rain water in winter from the sloping area in front of the tomb and was still full to the brim when I last saw it.

For reasons of convenience the stone-cutters arranged a trough at the right of the portal (Pl. V, 2) which got additional water from the rock surface by way of a slightly oblique, vertical channel. The shape of the trough points to the early Middle Ages.

The next and last stop for the caravans was at the *Qasr-el-Krum*, the castle of the vineyard, a tiny square building on top of a rock dating from the same period as the trough where the poll-tax had to be paid. Then the caravan proceeded towards the Holy City which they entered by way of the Damascus Gate which is only two kilometres distant as the crow flies. At the gate they deposited their spears and other weapons, to return to their villages with empty sacks but full purses.

Since the old Roman road crosses No Man's Land, the armistice boundary between Arab-held Palestine and Israel runs along Sanhedria–Shaafat, all traffic has stopped since 1948. Weeds have grown on the track several kilometres in length. Nobody is allowed to cultivate that desolate area, a loss to both Arabs and Israelis.

BAR KOKHBA AND AKIBA*

By Solomon A. Birnbaum

The forms of the letters in this Bar Kokhba document (see Pl. VI) are already rather close to what is termed fully developed Square script. However, the differences are still of sufficient importance to lead our modern eyes astray.

The Formula of Address

From the small amount of epistolary material that has come down from the earliest times, it is clear that the forms of address varied considerably. Even the Lachish Ostraca—few as they are—contain quite a number of different types. A historical examination of all the known formulae would be well worth the effort. The method of address employed in the Bar Kokhba Letter—' From X to Y, greeting ! '—does not occur in our oldest material. Our Letter is, however, not the earliest example preserved. My colleague, I. Wartski, has drawn my attention to a passage in Midrash Tannaim. I quote his translation : " He (R. Joshua [ben Ḥananiah]) said to him (R. Neḥuniah ben Haqanah) : ' I shall tell you something that my eyes saw, not what my ears heard (i.e., not hearsay) . . . They (Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel and Rabban Joḥanan ben Zakkai) said to him (Johanan the Scribe) : " Write : ' From Simeon ben Gamaliel and from Joḥanan ben Zakkai to our brethren . . . Peace ! Be it known to you that . . .' " [1] Another letter is mentioned here and it begins with exactly the same formula. Simeon ben Gamaliel and Joḥanan ben Zakkai wrote their letter about half a century before Bar Kokhba.[2] *Min* appears, many centuries before our document, in the Arsham Letters.[3] Following a suggestion by Professor Hooke, it

* The following note, though based on my own original readings, takes into account the studies by J. T. Milik (*Revue Biblique* 60 : 276 ff.) and H. L. Ginsberg (*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 131 : 25). Milik's identification of Bar Kosba and Bar Kokhba and his admirable interpretation of תשמים and תכבלים seem to me to be beyond doubt.

[1] ed. Hoffmann, pp. 175–6.

[2] As Wartski points out, roughly the same interval separates the Bar Kokhba Letter from our next one having this formula : " Our teacher (i.e., R. Judah the Prince) said to R. Efes : ' Write a letter in my name to our lord the Emperor Antoninus.' Thereupon he (R. Efes) rose and wrote : ' From Judah the Prince to our Sovereign the Emperor Antoninus.' He (R. Judah) took and read it, tore it up and wrote : ' To our Sovereign the Emperor from thy servant Judah ' . . ." (Gen. Rabbah, ed. Theodor-Albeck, ch. 75, par. 5). " The excellent Vatican MS. has the version : ' tore it up and said to him : " Write : ' From thy servant Judah to our Sovereign the Emperor Antoninus.' "

[3] A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, No. 26; G. R. Driver, *Aramaic Documents*, all letters. In them the formula is only: " From X to Y ", without the word " greetings ", presumably because the letters are official communications addressed to subordinates.

might be well to mention them here. Although they are not in Hebrew and not written by Jews, a connection in epistolary tradition seems possible, perhaps even likely.

Jeshua

The name at the end of line 1 is spelt ישע, in contrast with the form ישוע employed in the Beth Mashko Letter. There is no room for a waw between the ש and ע, and no trace of the downstroke of waw is visible, although the surface of the papyrus seems to be undisturbed in this place. The little stroke to be seen, on top, to the right of the ayin, cannot be the top of a waw : that letter starts with a small upstroke and then runs down vertically or with a slight slant, while our stroke is horizontal. As a glance at all the other specimens will show, it is the head of the left stroke of ש.

Jeshua's Men

Is the first letter of the last word in line 2 a heth or a hê ? The document contains no heth—unless our sign is one—so that we shall have to restrict our comparisons to hê.

Our sign corresponds to all four specimens of that letter. As in these, the top stroke is straight, horizontal and starts with a tick, the right shaft issues from its end, the left one at quite a distance from the left end. There are no features pointing to any other reading. Hence we have no reason to doubt that it is a hê.

This is still further confirmed when we compare our sign with the heth of the contemporaneous Beth Mashko Letter. The horizontal top bar of our sign starts with a tick, and the left downstroke issues from a point considerably further to the right. In heth there is no tick and the left downstroke fits onto the edge of the bar. Our sign is therefore clearly not a heth.

What is the next letter ? It has one or the other feature in common with daleth, hê, nûn, pe, resh, at various periods in their history. But it is obviously superfluous to make more than a cursory comparison with the forms these letters have in our document to see that identification with any one of them is out of the question. Only beth and kaph remain to be considered.

Examining all the specimens of beth, we notice that the top stroke is generally horizontal, occasionally it slants up to the right. In our sign it slants down. In practically all the specimens it starts with a tick. In our sign it does not. The base projects considerably to the right, which it does not do in our sign. According to all these features it is not a beth.

In kaph the top stroke is horizontal or, as in our sign, slopes down to the right. It has only the merest trace of an initial tick. The same feature occurs in רגלכם; in כבלים even that hint of a tick is absent. As in the kaphs, the downstroke does not start above the top bar and the base does not jut out to the right. No doubt, our sign is a kaph.

Accordingly the word is הכרך 'the fortress,' 'the fortified place,' as was also recognised by M. Delcor (letter of July 12, 1953, and forthcoming article in *Vetus Testamentum*) and Ginsberg. It refers, presumably, to the cave where the papyrus was found. It does not seem likely that the fortress had originally been elsewhere and that the letters were brought to the cave during the final retreat, as we know the rôle these caves played in guerilla warfare and have continued to do up to our time.

Were the Galileans to Be Avoided Or to Be Protected ?

The first word of line 4 is the crucial one of the whole document—and it happens to be the most difficult : two of the letters are ambiguous and a third appears to be missing.

Is the first letter waw or yodh ?

There are many yodhs for comparison in our document. A characteristic feature is that they start by slanting down to the right—although sometimes it does happen that there is a preliminary upstroke—and then bend to the left.

There are fewer waws. They all have a small initial upstroke ; the downstroke slopes just a very little or is vertical ; there is no essential bend—at the bottom there may be a gentle movement to the left.

From this it seems that our letter is a yodh.

Is the third letter a samekh ? If it were, the root of the word could be פסג, פסד, פסח, פסי, פסל, פסס, פסע, פסק, and some of these might possibly make sense. E.g., פסג can have the meaning " to break through, escape". That—in conjunction with Milik's and Ginsberg's suggestion that the sentence is a conditional one—would give : " [if] even a single one of the Galileans . . . should escape." Or we might choose פסד and translate : " [if] from the (number of the) Galileans . . . there should be a loss of (as much as) a single one."

But *is* the third letter a samekh ? In the samekh of line 1, the left stroke is curved and forms a corner with the bottom end of the right stroke. In our sign it is straight and passes the bottom end of the right stroke. In our sign the top stroke starts with a tick, in the samekh of line 1 it does not. These differences speak against our sign being a samekh.

The only other possibility, then, is a qoph. It is true the shaft is short, but an earlier form of the letter had this characteristic, and it generally takes a long time for a form to die out completely.

If what we have here is a qoph—and that seems certain to me—our list of possible roots would be : פקד, פקח, פקם, פקס, פקע, פקק, פקר, and it should be feasible to derive our word from one or the other of these. The niphal of פקד, with the sense " to be missing", at once comes to mind, so that our passage would mean : " [if] even a single one of the Galileans . . .

should be missing." Other verbs would suggest some kind of connection with the idea of getting away : פקע is " to split, burst, break forth, escape " ; פקר in the hiphil " to declare free, renounce ownership." The remaining roots are not incompatible with some idiomatic expression meaning escape : פקק " to split, drive into, force open, make a breach " ; פקס " to tear open, open forcibly " ; פקם " to prick, perforate " ; פקח " to open," hiphil " to cause to escape".

However, an external reason seems to stand in the way of accepting these verbs (as well as those of the samekh group). There appears to be insufficient space on the papyrus for a third radical. Even the narrowest of the above-mentioned letters would have some part of the extremities on its left-hand side showing on the left of the gap in the papyrus.

This difficulty could perhaps be overcome if we assumed that the gap does not exactly correspond to what is torn off, i.e., that the right and left parts of the papyrus are not in exactly the same position as before the tear occurred : that they are slightly closer together than they were in the original condition. Between lines 4 and 5, just below the spot where the missing letter would have been, we see a tiny strip of papyrus bridging the gap ; its left end is not, like the rest of the strip, horizontal, but is vertical. If it was originally horizontal and we put it back into this position, the gap becomes by so much wider ; the missing bit of papyrus might then have been wide enough to contain a narrow letter like daleth or resh. There are additional indications that the present gap is narrower than the width of the strip of papyrus that has been torn out : at the beginning of line 1 the shîn and the mem seem to be too close to each other, and the same holds good for the three letters *g*[*l*]*g* in line 2 ; it is hard to see how, in the first word of line 3, even a narrow final mem could have been squeezed into the width of the gap.

An advantage of this interpretation would be that we would not need to regard the qoph as the last letter of the word and then have to account for the width of the distance to the mem. On the other hand, גלגלה and ולאנשי (disregarding the tail of the nûn from the line above) and אדם and שאני are also very far apart, so that the possibility of qoph being the final letter cannot be excluded, in which case only one root—נפק—would be open to consideration. As its meaning is " to go out", our passage would read : "[if] even a single one of the Galileans . . . were to get away."

Hence we have reduced the number of candidates to this short list : יִפְקֹד, יִפְקַר, יִפֹּק. The meanings of all three happen to fit equally well into our passage and, as a matter of fact, they mean the same in the present context. Which of them would appear to be preferable ?

נפק, as an Aramaism, would not be surprising, and that our earliest example of it occurs in the Midhrashic literature would not speak against such a derivation. However, the word is not a frequent one in our Hebrew sources and this does not favour the reading יִפֹּק.

פקד is common from Mishnaic times onwards, but it does not seem ever to have been used in the sense of setting free ; it is, of course, possible to suggest the semantic development "set free" from the meaning "abandon" [4] but it seems rather unlikely that among an abundance of examples this sense alone should happen not to be represented anywhere.

Thus we are left with פקד. Unless we see a difficulty in the fact that the meaning "to miss" (qal), "to be missing" (niphal) is Biblical usage, it seems a reasonable and attractive possibility. The reading would then be : '[if] (even) a single one of the Galileans . . . should be missing.'

To sum up: Bar Kokhba did not desire to keep Jeshua ben Galgola away from the Galileans, nor did he order him to do them no harm. What he appears to have had in mind was that Jeshua ben Galgola should guard them well so that none of them should get away.[5]

Who Rescued the Galileans ?

The final signs on line 4 are somewhat difficult to read. Is the one before the last—consisting of a semi-circle and a shaft—a taw ? The shaft protrudes below the line bottom. None of the three taws in our document has this feature. At the bottom this stroke looks as if it turned horizontally to the left, but my impression from the photo is that this is only the shadow, seen through a tear at the edge of the papyrus. If it really were a stroke, it would be longer than the analogous strokes in the taws. The top of the downstroke is straight while in taw it is bent. The sign is wide, so that its inside has roughly a circular shape. The taws are narrower—the one in נתן is very narrow—with the effect that the inside is more or less an oblong. The right stroke of our sign is almost a semi-circle. In the taws we have a generally straight, or slightly curved, downstroke, connected by a straight bridge with the left stroke, the two right ones forming a very acute angle. This comparison indicates that our sign is not a taw.

Could it be a samekh ? The right part of our figure is three-quarters of a circle, in samekh it forms, together with the left stroke, a triangle. This does not favour the reading samekh.

Could the letter in question be a final mem ? In that case it would be a quadrilateral, looking like a somewhat angular Roman D. Our sign, however, resembles a Roman P with a shortened shaft. Hence identification as final mem seems hardly possible.

Before we try to solve this problem, we shall examine the subsequent sign. Is it a yodh ? The "head" is turned to the right. In the yodhs a head is rare ; when there is one, it is turned in the opposite direction. So also is the

[4] or one of its derivative meanings : "make ownerless — declare ownerless — renounce ownership of . . . "

[5] This would fit in well with Milik's suggestion that these Galileans were (Jewish) Christians.

plain bend which is more prevalent than the head. This speaks against the reading yodh.

Could our sign be a nûn ? If what appears to be a bottom stroke were only a shadow (see above), identification as nûn would be quite impossible, of course. If it were a real stroke it would slant upwards. In the nûns the base slopes down, and is longer, too. Hence, our sign does not seem to be a nûn.

Could it be a zayin ? Not if what looks like a stroke at the bottom should really be one. But if it were a shadow, then a similarity with the zayins of the Beth Mashko Letter would exist. However, the top is much too pronounced to make this identification likely.

Having tried all the letters looking sufficiently similar to warrant examination, and having had to reject them, we can only conclude that we are on the wrong track. This would mean that the strokes which seemed to us to belong together must be differently combined if they are to make sense. It is not difficult to see why we have been misled : all the strokes run into each other because the writer had reached the edge of the papyrus and had to squeeze in the end of the word.

There seems to be only one other possible way of connecting the strokes : the straight downstroke in the middle of this tangle does not belong to the curve on the right but to that on the left.

What remains on the right is thus a kind of semi-circle, somewhat angularised. Looking through all the letters, we find one, most specimens of which tally with our sign. That letter is kaph.

There is an additional detail which fits in with it. A magnifying glass reveals that what appeared to be the top of the big downstroke is slightly narrower than the rest of the stroke. That evidently means it does not form part of it at all, but belongs to the kaph, i.e., to its initial tick, which is a feature of many of the kaphs.

The last letter is a narrow triangle tapering downwards. Such a description would apply to samekh (apart from the narrowness, which would be due to the accidental lack of space), but in our sign the main downstroke is on the right, in samekh it is on the left. Thus it is not a samekh we have here.

There is only one other letter which is closed on all sides. That is final mem. But it is a quadrilateral and our sign is a triangle. Let us compare the strokes. All the specimens have a horizontal top stroke, apart from that in שמים. The left stroke slants down to the right. Both features are present in our sign, too. In mem, the lower third of the right stroke turns left, while in our sign there appears to be only one straight, vertical line. Closer inspection, however, shows that this is not so. Lack of space forced the writer to make the angle of the bend even more obtuse than usual, so that it has been flattened out to almost 180 degrees—but the bend is none the less indicated, thus removing any doubt that our letter is a final mem.

Accordingly our word is שהצלכם. To read this as שֶׁהִצְלְכֶם seems out of the question. הִצְל is a singular, and as it is connected with גללאים by the relative ש, the subject contained in הִצְל cannot be identical with the plural גללאים. What the writer presumably intended was הֶצְלְכֶם, meaning אֶצְלְכֶם. This was either a slip, pure and simple, or, more likely, a spelling mistake based on pronunciation. The tendency to confuse the glottal stop and /h/ is, of course, a common feature in old and modern languages. We find it represented in the Cave MSS., too : Isaiah A has הכנבה instead of אכנבה (MT אכנך, 45:4) and conversely אדס, אילילו instead of הדס (53:13), הילילו (23:1) ; the Covenant Scroll has הנשי (13:8) instead of אנשי, and conversely, אופיע (2:10) instead of הופיע.

Thus the passage in question means : " the Galileans who are at your place.'

Who Put Ben Aflul Into Irons ?

Bar Kokhba's threat to do to Jeshua ben Galgola, what had been done to Ben Aflul, seems to suggest that it was Bar Kokhba himself who had meted out the punishment in question. This has led to the reading " as I did to Ben Aflul." Let us, however, take a look at the last, and crucial, word of line 6.

The third letter in it is not a samekh, for the reasons mentioned when we discussed the identical sign in line 4. Here, in line 6, an additional difference may be seen : in this specimen the top stroke still has an old feature—the upward slant of its left half. The subsequent letter is a yodh, like that of אנשי (line 2) or מעיד (line 3). The last letter is clearly a beth, all the left part of whose base has been torn off, and that, possibly, together with one more letter —but with certainly not more than one. Our reading is thus [-]שעקיב.

We can hardly doubt that this is a reference to the great Rabbi Akiba. We had known that he looked upon Bar Kokhba as the Messiah, applying to him the messianic passage דרך כוכב מיעקב (Num. 24:17), and that he was possibly the author of the name " Bar Kokhba." But from the three final words of this short Letter we now learn a great deal more. They give us information on a point that has long been the subject of controversy : Did Akiba actively participate in the War or not ? Here he is revealed as having done so. The historical interest of this letter is therefore even greater than had been thought.

כמה שעקיב[א] לבן עפלול sounds somewhat abrupt but in no wise surprising in a hastily written letter. On the other hand, although we have learnt by experience that the difficulties which exist for us are often not shared by a writer's contemporaries, it may be permissible to attempt an emendation. Perhaps the present difficulty is only due to a haplography for כמה שעשה עקיב[א], since both words start with ayin.

Why was the end of line 6 left vacant and the word לבן transferred to line 7 ? There would have been ample room for it. And why does line 7 not start below line 6 but slightly more to the right ? And why is the distance between the two lines so much smaller than between the other lines ? It is true that the line distances 2—3—4 are also small, but that is only because line 2, from the middle onwards, droops very considerably ; at the beginnings of the lines the distances between them are wide and regular.

These three questions would be answered if we assumed that the Letter originally ended with the word [א]עקיב, either through a slip, or because this had actually been the first wording—and that לבן עפלול was added as a rectification or as an afterthought, when it was realised that כמה ש(עשה) עקיב[א] might not make the reference sufficiently clear.

Prince of Israel

On the basis of other documents, as yet unpublished, Milik suggests that the signature might possibly have been followed by the title נסיא/נשיא ישראל.

If our letter had contained these words they could hardly have been written in line 8, straight after *Kosba*. Even a very crowded arrangement, as in line 4, would have brought the final letters to the edge of the papyrus—and this edge is preserved and it is empty. Thus fifteen letters—even omitting the intervals between the four words—would have had to be compressed into the part which is torn off. And that is not possible. The corresponding space in lines 1—6 contains 10—13 units (i.e., letters or intervals between the words) each. The title would therefore have been written in the subsequent line. What is left of the papyrus under the name makes it unlikely (though not impossible) that there was writing there, because we would expect the top of it to be just showing at the bottom edge of the papyrus. The title would thus have had to be more to the left (of the hypothetical line 9). On the whole, it seems rather unlikely that in this document the name was followed by the title.

Who Penned This Letter ?

If we had only the body of this Letter we would have no means of deciding whether Bar Kokhba himself wrote it or whether he had it written for him. Fortunately, we have a few letters of the signature. Let us compare them with their counterparts in the body of the document.

Mem : Only part of the letter is preserved, and, add to that, the lower portion of the long stroke apparent on the photo seems to be just a tear in the papyrus. But it is possible to compare the top left portion of the letters : they differ completely. *Ayin :* In the text, the strokes have heads, in the signature they have not. *Waw* resembles the yodh rather than the waw of the text. *Final Nûn* is very short and almost straight. In the text it is very long and wavy.

With these letters differing so essentially it seems hardly possible that the text and signature were written by the same hand. Hence I believe the body of the letter was not written by Bar Kokhba himself.

The writer drew his letters irregularly. In addition, his lines are not straight. Comparison with the writing of the Biblical fragment from about the same time (*Rev. Bibl.*, 60, pl. XIIa) makes it clear that Bar Kokhba's secretary could hardly have been a professional scribe, nor a man who did a great deal of writing. On the other hand, he is perfectly literate. Vacillation in the use of *matres lectionis* and the omission of aleph in את are of no great importance. Even the rigidly standardised spelling systems of modern languages allow some variant spellings, and many more do actually occur in the writing of even educated people.

The Import of the Letter

Let us summarise what the discovery of this document means to us.

The Letter emanates from Bar Kokhba himself, the leader in the last struggle of Judaea against Rome, and is a direct piece of contemporary evidence in connection with that War, giving us a glimpse of an episode in which Jewish Christians possibly play a role.

It contains a reference by a contemporary to Rabbi Akiba, the leading figure of his time, and one of those responsible for the shaping of historical Judaism. It tells us of his active participation in the War.

It acquaints us with the original form of the name on which the *Bar Kozba/Kozeba* of our sources is based. It confirms that Simeon was his first name, which till now had only been inferred from the name Simeon on certain coins. It adds two new names to our onomasticon for the period.

It shows that Hebrew was employed for, at least, official letters, and illustrates the influence of Aramaic on this Hebrew.

It is one of our few first Hebrew letters in the original not written on ostraca.[6]

It demonstrates the use of papyrus for letter writing in second century Palestine, and gives us an initial formula employed at that time. It shows us Bar-Kokhba's handwriting, albeit in a fragmentary way. It provides a specimen of a private—i.e., non-scribal—hand of certain date.

It is a human document of extraordinary interest that has come to us, in the original handwriting, from antiquity.

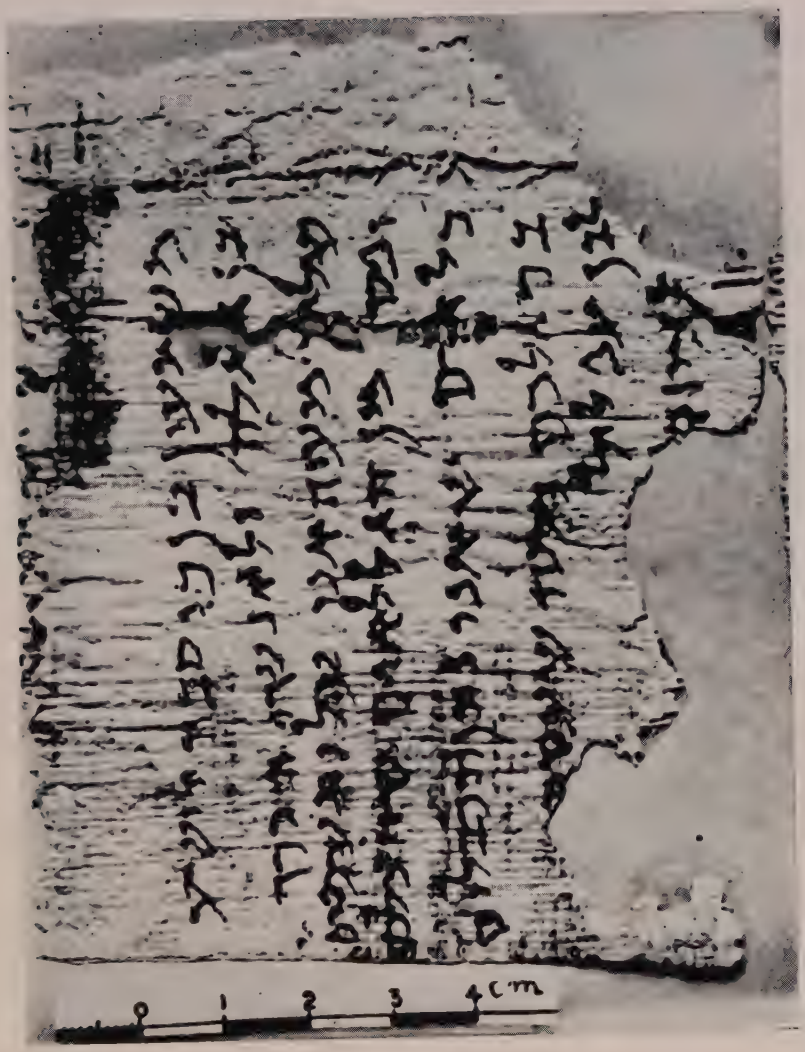
[6] As to the Beth Mashko Letter, see the next issue of this *Quarterly*.

The Text

משמעון בן כוסבה לישע 1
בן גנל]גלה ולאנשי הכרך 2
שלו]ם מעיד אני עליתשמים 3
יפקו]ד מן הגללאים שהצלכם 4
כל אדם שאני נתונתכבלים 5
ברגלכם כמה שעקיבו]א 6
לבן עפלול 7
[ש]מעון בן כוסבה] 8

Tentative Translation

1 From Simeon ben Kosba to Jeshua
2 ben Ga[l]gola and the men of the fortress,
3 Gree[tings]. I call Heaven to witness against me ⟨that if⟩
4 of the Galileans, who are at your place, there should be missing
5 (even) a single one, I will put fetters
6 on your feet, as Akiba ⟨did⟩
7 to Ben Aflul.
8 [Si]m̄eon b̄[en Kosba]



A letter from Simeon Bar-Kokhba.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

History of the Old Testament. By Dr. Paul Heinisch. Translated by W. Heidt, O.S.B. xviii, 492 pp. 1952. 25 illustrations. $6.50. The Liturgical Press, Minnesota, U.S.A.

This well-produced book is a Catholic presentation of Old Testament history from the Creation to the beginning of the Christian era. It is rather more conservative than the recently published one volume Catholic commentary on Holy Scripture. It maintains the Mosaic authorship of all the Pentateuchal legislation, and ascribes foresight to him in legislating for agricultural life in Canaan. It lists Horites among the peoples who had lost national identity by the time of Joshua, and were living in Canaan as remnants. The place and importance of the Hurrians should have been explained. The priority of Ezra to Nehemiah is maintained, although the general opinion of modern scholars is in favour of the priority of Nehemiah. No doctrinal points are involved in this or in the previous point, and the learned author might well have availed himself of the increased freedom of interpretation in non-doctrinal matters granted by the Encyclical *divino afflante*. The book is, nevertheless, a work of considerable scholarship, and finely produced. Its excellent system of cross-references makes it a very easy book for the student to use, and it will no doubt be in large demand in Catholic colleges and seminars. S. H. H.

The Servant of the Lord, and other Essays on the Old Testament. By H. H. Rowley. xii, 327 pp. 25s. net. Lutterworth Press. 1952.

All students of the Old Testament will be grateful to Professor Rowley for making these eight valuable essays more generally available, as they could not be while buried in the pages of various specialist and foreign journals. The first essay, that on the Servant of the Lord, has not been published before, and everyone will be glad to have Professor Rowley's judicious summing-up of the present position in this most important subject. It is particularly welcome to have Professor Rowley's own position so clearly stated. Since he has done me the honour to quote what were my views on the Servant Songs nearly twenty years ago, I ought to say that my position has changed considerably since then. I no longer regard the Servant passages as coming from a different author than the author of the rest of Deutero-Isaiah, and would now interpret the changed outlook observable in what we may assume to be the later oracles of the prophet, as the result of his own disillusionment following the bright hopes of the first period of the return from Exile. The prophetic interpretation of history had involved the conception of a pro-

gressive narrowing of the pattern of revelation. The choice of Israel, and the rejection of Babylon and Egypt, was the first step in the process, though Babylon and possibly Egypt contributed significant images which were to undergo transformation in the development of Israel's religion. The course of history narrowed the pattern down to Judah alone, and as Judah failed to be the vehicle of the divine purpose, the line narrowed down to the remnant, purged by the experience of the Exile. Finally, in the experience of the author of Deutero-Isaiah, the returned remnant too failed, a failure which we can see reflected in Haggai and Malachi, and the process of narrowing down reached its limit, so far as the prophetic experience was concerned, in the figure of the Suffering Servant of Jahveh, whether collective or individual is irrelevant here. Nothing remained but the final narrowing down to the figure of the Son of Man, embracing the suffering of the Servant as his own destiny for the fulfilment of the divine purpose and the creation of the new community, the Israel of God. Hence I find myself now in close agreement with both Professor Rowley and Professor North, especially with the former's closing sentence on pp. 87–8 of the book under discussion. The same theme is discussed in the second essay with more especial reference to the question of the relation between the two conceptions of the Davidic Messiah and the Suffering Servant. It is very useful to have here a criticism of the views of J. Jeremias and Dupont-Sommer on this point. The publication of the Dead Sea texts has brought a fresh element into the discussion, and the figure of the martyred Teacher of Righteousness certainly does raise some curious and intriguing problems. In the fourth essay, on the chronological order of Ezra and Nehemiah, the author deals trenchantly with some recent attacks on the now generally accepted priority of Nehemiah. The last essay in the book, on Recent Discovery and the Patriarchal Age, is worthy of special mention as a most helpful summing-up of the present position of archaeological research in relation to the Old Testament.

The whole volume will be found an invaluable and indispensable aid to the student of the Old Testament. S. H. H.

The Hand-Produced Book. By David Diringer. xii, 603 pp. 60s. net. Hutchinson's Scientific and Technical Publications.

For most people such a book as this would represent the work of a life-time. But it is barely five years since Dr. Diringer produced a monumental, no other word will do, book on the Alphabet, in which we were shown all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, as it were, busily engaged in discovering means of perpetuating their thoughts and achievements in the form of writing.

Now, hardly drawing breath, he has produced another even weightier volume of over 600 pages dealing with the evolution of the book from its earliest beginnings down to the era of printed books.

The first chapters, dealing with the earliest systems of writing, to some extent duplicate material in the earlier book on the Alphabet. It may be remarked that since the publication of this book one of the Cretan scripts, Linear B, has been deciphered by Messrs. Ventris and Chadwick. A full account of the method and results of the discovery has been published in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* LXXIII. Dr. Diringer assumes, correctly no doubt, that the earliest books in the broadest sense of the terms were the clay tablets of Babylonia and the papyrus rolls of Egypt, and the next two chapters of his book, III and IV, deal with these two important subjects. Chapter V describes the development of the use of leather as a writing material, and the invention of parchment. Incidentally, this chapter contains a full account of the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls, admirably illustrated. In chapter VI Dr. Diringer allows himself some latitude, and discusses what might be called problems of publication, in connection with Greek and Latin book production. This chapter is full of most interesting material.

The very origins of writing itself are closely bound up with religion, and in chapter VII Dr. Diringer develops his interesting thesis that the book follows religion. It is well known that most of the writing of the Middle Ages was done in monasteries, where, indeed, the art of writing and the making of books may be said to have been preserved for the West ; in this connection it is amusing to observe that the Benedictine rule considered reading to be a suitable penance for Lent. In the next two chapters the learned author follows the book to the uttermost parts of the earth, to China and Japan in the east, and to the Maya civilization in the furthest west. The last chapter deals with what are called Anglo-Celtic Contributions. There is an appendix on inks, pens, and other writing tools. A very minor objection might be raised to the description of certain figures engaged in writing Gospels as ' scribes'. Actually any one who writes may be called a scribe, but in four of the illustrations in the appendix the halo, or an accompanying symbol such as the eagle, shows that the figure engaged in writing is the author of the Gospel, e.g., St. John (Fig. XI–8), or St. Matthew (Fig. XI-5).

It would obviously be impossible to criticize in detail such a vast body of material drawn from so many sources and representing so many languages and culture areas, but we have cause to be very grateful to Dr. Diringer for his courageous and successful attempt to give us for the first time in English a complete history of the long stage of book-making prior to the invention of printing. The illustrations are superb, and represent enormous labour on the author's part in collecting and obtaining permission to use them. Nor should the praise be forgotten which is due to the enterprise of the publishers in producing such a fine example of modern book production. The bibliographies at the end of each chapter are most useful. One could have wished that the very numerous quotations from modern authors had been accompanied by proper documentation. S. H. H.

Babylonian and Assyrian Religion. By S. H. Hooke. Pp. 128. London : Hutchinson's University Library. 1953. 8s. 6d.

Professor Hooke's purpose in writing this book is to provide the ordinary reader with a reliable and up-to-date account of the religious beliefs and practices of the ancient inhabitants of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, whose civilisation so greatly influenced the other peoples of the Near East, not least the Hebrews. The book is accordingly addressed to students both of comparative religion and of the Old Testament, for whom a knowledge of Babylonian religion is indispensable. It is concerned in the main with the elements common to the religion of both the Babylonians and the Assyrians, but outstanding differences in the religions of the two peoples are duly noted.

The work consists of ten main chapters. Ch. i deals with the sources which archaeology has made available for the study of the subject ; ch. ii with the cultural background of the religion ; ch. iii with the names and functions of the most important gods of the pantheon ; ch. iv with temple buildings and personnel ; ch. v with rituals ; ch. vi with mythology ; ch. vii with religion and daily life ; ch. viii with divination and its technique ; ch. ix with divination and astrology ; and ch. x with the gods and the moral government of the world. An appendix of twenty pages contains a selection of ritual and other religious texts in illustration of the account of the religion given in the main body of the book. There is a useful bibliography and a general index.

The fact that Sumerian culture has shaped and influenced almost every aspect of Babylonian and Assyrian culture makes it difficult to determine what elements in the religion of the Babylonians are of purely Semitic origin. Professor Hooke thinks it possible, however, that the cult of the moon-god and of the sun-god may have been brought into Mesopotamia by the invading Semites (p. 28). Contrasts in Mesopotamian and ancient Egyptian religion are brought out—for example, there is nothing in Mesopotamia corresponding to what appears to be a totemistic stage of religion in Egypt (p. 23, 34) ; and again, whereas in Egypt the Pharaoh was unequivocally divine, it is questionable whether divine kingship was an essential element in Babylonian religion. Professor Hooke is careful to add, however, that something here depends upon the terminology used, for the situation may be regarded somewhat differently if the word " sacral " were substituted for the word " divine " (p. 35f.). Professor Hooke is especially interesting when he writes on mythology and rituals. Students of the Old Testament will be much struck, for example, by his description of the *puḫu*—or substitution—ritual, and the light which it may throw on the Hebrew ritual of the Day of Atonement (pp. 43 ff.). A comparison of the Tammuz liturgies with the Old Testament provides some interesting parallels. As examples may be cited Psalm lxxiv. 3–9 and the descriptions in the liturgies of the ruin wrought in the temples of Tammuz by the powers of the underworld ; and again, " the word of Tammuz " and its effects reminds us strongly of " the word of Yahweh " and its

destructive power when he is angry. Professor Hooke believes that it is here not a question of direct borrowing by the Hebrews from Mesopotamian sources, but rather of the use by the Hebrews of ancient poetic forms and metaphors which lay ready to their hand (pp. 40 ff.). Some of the details given about the Babylonian clergy are interesting. We learn, for example, that there was no rule of celibacy, that stipends varied considerably, and that offices could be held in plurality (pp. 53 f.). Those who have been accustomed to think that Yahweh alone of the gods of the ancient world was a moral god will doubtless be surprised to learn that in the proemium to the Code of Hammurabi is to be found " a clear statement that the high gods are animated by a moral purpose, and that the moral standards set forth in the Code represent the will of the gods " (p. 98). Like the Hebrew Psalmist, the Babylonian worshipper could feel conscious of moral offences he had committed (p. 35, 99). An unusually interesting suggestion is that in the re-editing of the Epic of Creation, and the suppression of many of the more unedifying Sumerian myths about the gods, may be seen something like the prophetic editing of Israel's early history (p. 99).

These few illustrations are enough, it is hoped, to show that in his selection of material Professor Hooke reveals a rare judgment both as to what is important and as to what is likely to arouse the interest of the reader. The comparative brevity with which the subject is treated cannot conceal the wide learning of the author, nor his ability to express, impressively and in a few words, conclusions profoundly important for the history of religion (see, for example, the last sentence on p. 102). It is of the utmost importance that books written for the layman should be trustworthy. This Professor Hooke's work certainly is. While, as he rightly says, " any book on the subject of Babylonian and Assyrian religion is bound to get out of date in a few years, as new material accumulates and is made available." (Introd., p. ixf.), he has succeeded in giving an admirable account of the religion of these peoples so far as it is known at the present time.

Two brief comments. The addition of a chronological table would have added to the usefulness of the book. And secondly, on p. 98, line 15, " millennium " is no doubt nothing more than a *lapsus calami* for " century."

D. Winton Thomas.

The Committee have to acknowledge with thanks the following :—

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